

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HAMBUR 00654 061843Z

43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 ACDA-19 SAJ-01 OMB-01 IO-14 /136 W

----- 054439

P R 061700Z JUN 74

FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2966

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMBURG 0654

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJ: JUNE 9, 1974 LAND ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY

REF: HAMBURG 616

1. WITH ONLY THREE DAYS TO GO BEFORE THE JUNE 9 STATE ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY TO ELECT A NEW LANDTAG AS WELL AS COUNCILS IN 24 OUT OF THE 48 COMMUNAL COUNTIES AND IN THE TOWNSHIPS OF HANNOVER, BRAUNSCHWEIG AND DELMENHORST, THE CAMPAIGN SEEMS TO HAVE RUN OUT OF STEAM AND THE PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES HAVE BECOME REPETITIVE. DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS WE HAVE CRISSCROSSED LOWER SAXONY, SPEAKING WITH THE CANDIDATES THEMSELVES AND THEIR CAMPAIGN ADVISORS. THE FOLLOWING ARE OUR IMPRESSIONS AND OUR ESTIMATE OF THE PROBABLE OUTCOME WITH ONLY 72 HOURS TO GO BEFORE THE POLLS OPEN.

2. LAST NIGHT THE CANDIDATES -- THE INCUMBENT SPD MINISTER PRESIDENT ALFRED KUBEL, HIS CDU OPPONENT, WILFRIED HASSELMANN, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HAMBUR 00654 061843Z

AND THE FDP LAND CHAIRMAN, ROETGER GROSS, PARTICIPATED IN A

PUBLIC DEBATE WHICH WAS OSTENSIBLY HELD TO DISCUSS THE CAMPAIGN ISSUES. ALSO PARTICIPATING WERE MINISTER PRESIDENT HEINZ KUEHN, DEPUTY NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF THE SPD; MINISTER PRESIDENT GERHARD STOLTENBERG, DEPUTY NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF THE CDU; AND FOREIGN MINISTER HANS DIETER GENSCHER, ACTING NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF THE FDP. AS WE EXPECTED, THE LOWER SAXONY CANDIDATES WERE VERY MUCH ECLIPSED BY KUEHN, STOLTENBERG AND GENSCHER. THE CAMPAIGN WAS HARDLY ALLUDED TO AND THE DEBATE QUICKLY DIGRESSED INTO IRRELEVANT MATTERS PERTAINING TO LAENDER REPRESENTATION IN THE BUNDESRAT AND QUESTIONS RELATED TO A PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION. WHILE THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION WILL INFLUENCE AND ALTER THE COMPOSITION OF THE PLENARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE BUNDESRAT AND WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT OF THE ELECTION, NEVERTHELESS, TO HAVE DISCUSSED IT IN ITS MORE ABSTRACT FORM SEEMED AN ANTI-CLIMACTIC WAY TO CONCLUDE THE LAST PUBLIC DEBATE OF THE PROTAGONISTS.

3. FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CAMPAIGN, THE BRANDT GOVERNMENT AND LATER THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT, MOBILIZED ALL ITS POLITICAL RESOURCES SO AS TO REPULSE THE CDU'S THREATENED CONTINUED POLITICAL ADVANCE FOLLOWING CDU RECENT ELECTORAL VICTORIES IN HAMBURG, SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN AND RHEINLAND-PFALZ. THE WISHFUL THINKING IN SOME SPD QUARTERS THAT A TIDAL WAVE OF SYMPATHY FOR BRANDT WOULD CREATE A SWELL OF SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY HAS FAILED TO MATERIALIZE. RATHER, IN OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH SPD POLITICIANS AND JOURNALISTS IN LOWER SAXONY, WE HAVE HEARD AN AUDIBLE SIGH OF RELIEF THAT BRANDT IS A CHANCELLOR AUSSER DIENST AND THAT THE PARTY IS REPRESENTED BY THE MORE PRAGMATIC AND DYNAMIC HELMUT SCHMIDT. THE ECHO OF THIS SIGH, WHICH WE HAVE HEARD IN CDU QUARTERS, IS A PESSIMISTIC GROAN THAT THE BONN GOVERNMENT CRISIS HAPPENED WHEN IT DID, THEREBY GIVING SCHMIDT AN OPPORTUNITY TO GRASP THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT FIRMLY AND TO PROJECT AN IMAGE OF STABILITY AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AT A TIME WHEN A DETERIORATING NATIONAL REPUTATION OF THE SPD/FDP COALITION GOVERNMENT IN BONN WAS BEGINNING TO DEFLECT SOME OF ITS TRADITIONAL ELECTORAL SUPPORT IN LOWER SAXONY TOWARD THE CDU.

4. EIGHT TO TEN WEEKS AGO, WE BEGAN TO SEE AN ELECTORAL PENDULUM SWINGING INEXORABLY TOWARD A CDU VICTORY AT THE POLLS. WE STILL BELIEVE THE CDU WILL WIN A PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORY  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HAMBUR 00654 061843Z

OF SORTS BY WINNING A PLURALITY OF THE VOTES BUT THAT A MAJORITY VICTORY WILL ELUDE THE PARTY BY A HAIR OR AS LITTLE AS ONE OR TWO PERCENT.

5. KNOWLEDGEABLE SPD POLITICAL LEADERS LIKE STATE SECRETARY ERNST MAHRENHOLZ AND HERBERT ERBEN, CO-EDITOR OF THE NEUE HANNOVERSCHE PRESSE, HAVE TOLD US RECENTLY THAT THE BRANDT RESIGNATION HAS CLEARED THE AIR AND WHILE THEY EXPECT THEIR

PARTY TO LOSE ITS MAJORITY POSITION IN THE LANDTAG, THAT, TOGETHER WITH THE FDP, A COALITION GOVERNMENT CAN NOW BE FORMED IN HANNOVER, ALBEIT, ALSO BY A MARGIN OF ONE OR TWO SEATS.

6. ROETGER GROSS, THE FDP STANDARD BEARER, IS CONFIDENT OF HIS PARTY'S CHANCES OF CROSSING THE 5 PERCENT THRESHOLD AND OF WINNING A REPRESENTATION IN THE LANDTAG. WE BELIEVE HIS ASSESSMENT IS WELL-JUSTIFIED AND THAT HIS PARTY MIGHT WIN ABOUT EIGHT PERCENT OF THE VOTE CAST.

7. THE PRESENT SPD AND FDP ASSESSMENTS ARE RATHER RUEFULLY ACCEPTED BY THE CDU CAMPAIGN WORKERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE RECENTLY TALKED. AT THIS MOMENT, THE ELECTORAL PENDULUM SEEMS TO HAVE COME TO REST AT DEAD CENTER AND WE BELIEVE A ONE OR A TWO PERCENT MAJORITY WILL NOW DETERMINE THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION. ONE ADDITIONAL NEW ELEMENT MUST, HOWEVER, BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN CONSIDERING THE ELECTORAL EQUATION. GUENTER LUDWIG, A CDU CANDIDATE IN THE NORTHEIM DISTRICT, WAS KILLED IN AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT ON JUNE 3 AND THE ELECTION IN THAT DISTRICT HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL JUNE 23. THIS DISTRICT HAS BEEN A TRADITIONAL SPD BASTION IN THE PAST AND IT IS QUITE PROBABLE, THEREFORE, THAT IF THE JUNE 9 ELECTIONS RESULT IN A TIE, THE ELECTION IN NORTHEIM TWO WEEKS LATER WILL TILT THE SCALES IN FAVOR OF THE REELECTION OF THE KUBEL GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, AS WE APPROACH THE FINAL DAY, THE REALLY SIGNIFICANT DECIDING FACTOR IN THIS EQUATION HAS BECOME THE PERSONALITY OF HELMUT SCHMIDT. HIS NEW LEADERSHIP IN BONN, WE BELIEVE, WILL BE THE FINAL AND MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN TILTING THE SCALES SLIGHTLY BUT DECISIVELY IN FAVOR OF AN SPD/FDP VICTORY ON JUNE 9.  
BROGAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** NATIONAL ELECTIONS, ELECTION FORECASTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTH, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, ELECTION CANDIDATES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 06 JUN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** smithrj  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974HAMBUR00654  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740145-1093  
**From:** HAMBURG  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740670/aaaacica.tel  
**Line Count:** 145  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** HAMBURG 616  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** smithrj  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 08 MAY 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <08 MAY 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by smithrj>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** JUNE 9, 1974 LAND ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY  
**TAGS:** PINT, GE, CDU, SPD, (GROSS, REOTGER), (KUBEL, ALFRED), (HASSELMANN, WILFRIED)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005